

# Bacterial Vaginosis Facts

Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) is one of the most common vaginal infections and occurs when the normal balance of bacteria in the vagina is disrupted.

## Possible Signs and Symptoms

- Some women report having no symptoms
- Unpleasant vaginal odor
- Abnormal discharge from vagina, usually a white or gray color
- Burning or painful sensation while urinating
- Itching around outside of vagina

## Transmission

- Occurs when the normal balance of bacteria in the vagina is disrupted. This can occur for many reasons, some of which might be:
  - Having a new sex partner or multiple sex partners
  - Douching
  - Using an IUD (intrauterine device) for birth control

## Prevention

- Abstain from oral, anal, and vaginal sex
- Consistent, correct use of latex or polyurethane condoms or barriers during oral, anal, or vaginal sex
- Limit number of sexual partners
- Do not douche
- Avoid sexual contact until treatment of BV is completed, even if symptoms go away

## Treatment

- Examination and tests by a health care provider to diagnose and determine best course of treatment
- Treatment includes medications (antibiotics) prescribed by a health care provider
- Follow-up examination can help ensure that treatment has been successful
- Male partners generally do not need to be treated but BV can pass between female partners
- BV can recur after treatment

## Complications/Effects if Left Untreated

- Can increase risk for infection of HIV and other STDs
- Can increase chances of HIV infected woman passing HIV to a partner
- Possible complications if woman is pregnant
- Increase in risk of acquiring PID following surgical procedures such as hysterectomy or an abortion

## Help Stop the Spread of Infection...

- Refrain from sexual contact (oral, anal, or vaginal sex)
- Seek medical attention
- Refrain from any sexual activity with others until your treatment has been completed
- Take all medications prescribed, even if you no longer have symptoms

For more information about STDs or about testing and treatment in New Jersey, please call the HIV/STD hotline or visit our web site:

**1-800-624-2377**

<http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/stdhome.htm>

